

# Healthy Holiday Eats!

Healthy Columbus Nutrition Seminar – November 25, 2013  
Ashley Harris, MS, RD, CSO



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The average American gains between 1 and 5 pounds during the holiday season.....



**Most never take it off.**

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**Outline**

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- Discuss strategies for preventing holiday weight gain
- Review favorite healthy holiday foods
- Provide tips for nutritional and other management of holiday stress

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**Holidays are "Perfect Recipe" for weight gain**

More available food and drinks  
(Holiday parties, Dining out, Treats around home and office)

+

Moving less  
(Cold weather, Dark early, Busy schedule)

+

Stress!!!!

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**A little goes a long way...**

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- 100 calories extra per day =  
10 pounds weight gain per year  
100 pound weight gain over 10 years!
- Most people do not notice weight gain until it is cut by 20%
- 2000 steps =  
100 calories burned



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### How do we fight the holiday bulge?

1. Be aware of how much we eat
2. Make healthy food choices
3. Move!!
4. Learn to manage holiday stress

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### Be aware of how much we eat!!



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### What influences our calorie intake?

- Many subtle clues and unconscious thoughts influence our eating



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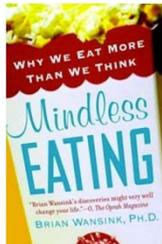
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### What influences our calorie intake?

- Several eating types or “danger zones”
  - Most of us fall into at least one or two
  - Holidays can cause us to fall into more or all!



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### Eating “danger zones”

**Meal Stuffer** – eat mostly during mealtimes but to excess. Often clean plate and go back for seconds, eating so quickly they end up uncomfortably full

**Restaurant Indulger** – frequently dines outside the home

**Snack Grazer** – reach for whatever food is available, convenience usually more important than taste. More from habit than hunger.

**Party Binger** – often in high-distraction environments where food is the background for business or fun (buffets, receptions, tailgates, happy hours)

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### Tips for eating at holiday meals

- Follow the ½ plate rule – half plate vegetables!
- Wait 20 minutes until going back for more
- Get in habit of leaving at least one bite on plate
- Substitute fruit for dessert



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### Tips for dining at home

- Choose smaller plates
- Avoid “family style” dining
  - Pre-plate high calorie items in kitchen and leave there
  - Only keep low-calorie vegetable dishes on table
- Freeze or give away left-overs
- Control the environment
  - Slow down eating pace with classical or slow tempo music
  - Avoid distractions – turn off the TV, shut the computer, put away the paper



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### Tips for dining at restaurants

- Ask the server for help
  - Request 1/2 meal be pre-wrapped in to-go box
  - Decline bread be brought to table
- Be savvy with your order
  - Order dressings, creams, sauces on side if at all
  - Watch for menu items indicating high fat/calorie foods: creamed, crispy, breaded, tempura, fritters, Alfredo, au gratin, au beurre, batter-dipped, béarnaise
  - Choose grilled, steamed, baked broiled
- Watch the drinks!
  - Try water, diet sodas or wine-spritzers



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### Tips for avoiding snacking

- Keep the junk food out!
  - If can not keep out of office/home, keep out of sight in opaque containers or tucked away
- Keep healthy options visible and ready
- Never eat directly from the package
  - Pre-portion out an appropriate serving and take it to sit down, eat, and enjoy



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### Tips for eating at holiday parties

- Choose a smaller plate
- Eat before you go
- Use the volume approach
  - Fill up on the low-calorie, high-fiber vegetables first
- Be choosy
  - Survey the spread before you load up and only choose the things you like the most
- To the two-item method
  - Put only 2 items on your plate each food table trip
- Keep food far away
  - Across the room is ideal but at least an arms length



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### Make healthy food choices!!



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### Veg out

- **Fruits & Vegetables** = 1/3 the calories of protein and starches
  - Considered free (0 points) on new Weight Watchers



- Plant foods contain **phytonutrients** = powerful cancer fighting and health promoting nutrients
  - Include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, beans, and legumes

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### Phytonutrients (aka phytochemicals)



- Give plants distinctive color, smell, taste

- Provide MANY health benefits
  - Especially for fighting cancer and heart disease



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### From the AICR (American Institute for Cancer Research)



Traditional American Plate      Transitional Plate      New American Plate

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## Super Holiday Foods

Phytonutrient Rich Holiday Favorites



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**Cranberries**  
(anthocyanidins)



- Anti-bacterial
  - Prevents urinary tract infections
- High in vitamin C, fiber & antioxidants = all potent cancer fighters!
- Lowers LDL “bad” cholesterol and protects against heart disease
- Choose fresh, dried or unsweetened juice!

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**Pumpkins**  
(carotenoids)



- Prevents DNA damage and protects against many cancers
  - Especially lung
- Also protective against heart disease and diabetes
- Great low-calorie substitution for fats in holiday recipes!

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**Citrus Fruits**  
(polyphenols, terpenes, hesperidin)



- High in vitamin C
  - Strengthens immune system & combats stress
- Fight cancers in numerous ways
  - Especially cancers of digestive tract
- Even the peel is healthy!
  - Contains anti-inflammatory and cholesterol lowering phytonutrients
- Add grated orange or lemon zest to baked goods and holiday recipes for extra flavor and health!

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**Greens**  
(beta-carotene, lutein)



- Rich in calcium, folate magnesium, vitamin K
- Reduce risk of cancer and heart disease
- Good for eye health
  - Contains phytonutrients which protect against macular degeneration
- Spruce up dishes by adding chopped greens to casseroles, meatloaf/meatball mixtures, mashed potatoes

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**Figs**  
(polyphenols)



- Rich in potassium, fiber and vitamin B6
  - Improves cardiovascular health
  - Alleviates constipation & PMS symptoms
- Phytonutrients strong Antioxidants
  - Protective for many cancers and heart disease
- Can go with savory and sweet dishes!
  - Add to grilled meats, poultry and salads
  - Add to granola, ice cream, cookie dough

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**Onions/Garlic**  
(allicin, sulfides)



- Potent cancer fighters!
  - Especially stomach cancer
- Anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties
- Helps prevent blood clotting
- To maximize benefits, enzymes need to be released from cell walls and activated
  - Chop, dice or mince before cooking
  - Need to wait 10 minutes for enzymes to be fully activated so not destroyed by heat

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### Don't forget the herbs

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- **Rosemary**
  - Strong cancer fighting & anti-inflammatory properties
  - Boosts immune system, digestion, cardiovascular health
  - Add to dough or as a marinade for meat & poultry
- **Thyme**
  - Lowers cancer/heart disease risk
  - Improves brain function
  - Add to soups, stews, vegetables, poultry or fish!



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### and spices.....

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- **Cinnamon**
  - Anti-oxidant, anti-bacterial & anti-microbial properties
  - May help lower blood sugar
  - Can add to savory foods (soups, stews, chili) or sweets (desserts, cocoa, yogurts)
- **Nutmeg**
  - Prevents blood clots, improves immune system, anti-bacterial & anti-diarrheal
  - Matches well with spinach, green beans, carrots, sweet potatoes



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### Get creative with cooking

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- Simple cooking techniques and recipe substitutions can cut 100's of calories from your diet
- Adding vegetables to dishes lowers calories while boosting nutritional value
- Spice it up!
- See healthy cooking tips handout for more info!



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## Move!!



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### Benefits of getting into shape:

- **Improved Immune Function =**  
Less likely to get sick from winter colds and flu
- **Stronger Bones =**  
Becomes increasingly important as we age
- **Calorie Burning Without Trying =**  
More muscle means more calories burned at rest and faster metabolism
- **Glowing Skin=**  
Regular workouts increase overall circulation and the skin's ability to produce collagen, a natural skin plumper
- **Brighter Days=**  
Studies show that regular exercise also combats depression.

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### How much is enough?

- Benefits seen with as little as 30 minutes a day
- Harder is not always better
  - Moderate physical activity (i.e. brisk walk) offers mostly the same benefits as intense aerobic activity
  - Less likely to get injured or "burn out"
- Does NOT have to be all at once
  - Studies show it is the cumulative workout minutes that count
  - 5-10 minute activity bursts throughout the day great way to reach fitness goals



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### Ideas to get moving

- Park further away from the door
- Use the stairs whenever possible
- Cleaning counts
  - Try putting headphones to get into the job and keep your heart rate up
- Dance!
- Get outside
  - Sled with the kids
  - Go for a walk in the woods
  - Fresh air (as little as 5 minutes/day) provides extra mood boosting benefits
- Take a break and stretch at the top of every hour



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### Learn to manage holiday stress



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### Manage stress with nutrition

- Keeping good control of blood sugar
- Eating certain foods known to be “stress busters”
- Avoid foods that make stress effects worse: sugar, caffeine, and alcohol



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### Controlling blood sugar

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**Blood Sugar**

Low blood sugar

- = simple carbohydrates and large meals
- = complex carbohydrates in small meals

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### Carbohydrates

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<p><b>Simple Carbs- choose LESS often</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Whites" (white bread, white rice, white pasta, regular crackers)</li> <li>• White potatoes</li> <li>• Soda, Juice</li> <li>• Candy, Sweets</li> <li>• Sugar, Honey, Jelly, Jam</li> </ul>	<p><b>Complex Carbs- choose MORE often</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole wheat/whole grain bread</li> <li>• Brown rice, Whole wheat pasta</li> <li>• Whole grain crackers</li> <li>• Starchy vegetables (sweet potato, winter squash, corn, peas)</li> <li>• Whole fruits</li> <li>• Other whole grains (oats, quinoa, bran, bulger, etc)</li> </ul>
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### Stress busting foods

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complex carbohydrates</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin C foods</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fatty fish</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Milk</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nuts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Decaffeinated tea</li> </ul>	
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### Other ways to reduce stress

- Get outside
- Take 5 minutes to focus on breathing
- Get enough sleep (8 hours optimal)
- Take a yoga or meditation class
- Download a relaxation podcast
- Take a bath
- Read a book
- Simplify life!



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**THANK YOU –  
and good luck!!**



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